

officer, and Leslie, after waiting a month, sailed away with his whole armament.

Early in January (1781) news came to Richmond—the little town had just become the capital of the State¹—that the British fleet had again entered the Chesapeake and was ascending the James. Jefferson called out the militia and began to move the public property to Westham, a village on the James above the head of navigation. The foe was under the command of the once brilliant but now cautious and feeble, Benedict Arnold. There was not a handful of raw militia to oppose his regulars, and resistance would have been a mockery. No resistance was offered, and the region lay at the mercy of the traitor. He looted the town of all its military stores and of such public property as Jefferson had failed to save. After remaining in Richmond for one day, he then dropped down the James, plundering as he went. In the consternation that prevailed personal safety was the law of the hour. The members of the Governor's Council and of the assembly gave up all to save their families and themselves. Jefferson was indefatigable in supervising the removal of the military stores and public property. Having accompanied his family on their way to a place of safety, he turned back and was pushing on to Manchester when his horse sank dead beneath him. With the saddle and bridle on his back he went to a farm house near by and secured an unbroken colt. His excellent horsemanship now stood him in good stead. He mounted the colt and sped on. In his six days' absence from Richmond, he was eighty-four hours in the saddle.

Upon the departure of Arnold, Jefferson and the legislature returned to Richmond and resumed the business of government. But civil government was now at an end. in Virginia. Cornwallis and Tarleton had crossed the border and were conducting a warfare unworthy of their race and their own better natures. The legislature conferred almost absolute power upon Jefferson, but this availed little. What was needed was muskets, and these could not be procured, for there was no money with which to buy them, and there were, no factories in which they